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The improvement of the component of emotion management of the prospective teachers' emotional competence in the process of studies

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Abstract

In Latvia, like in any other country, research is conducted both in order to evaluate the content of teacher's professional competence on the whole and to investigate some specific component of professional competence. However, teacher's emotional competence that is especially important for teacher's work has not been investigated in Latvia as yet.

The research indicates a positive effect of the study programme content and the process for improving management of prospective music teachers' emotions. The acquired knowledge and skills as well as experience gained in the study process contribute to the development of skills of emotional self-awareness, of resisting to negative emotions and to strengthening self-control.

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1. Introduction

In Latvia, as in any other country, pedagogical scientists explore problems of the content of professional competence in general (Andersone, 2010) and investigate some particular component of professional competence as well, for instance: improvement of social competence (Plaude, 2003),

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pedagogical–psychological competence (Rutka, 2010), pedagogical competence (Čehlovs & Čehlova, 2010), physical competence, and also explore competence in some concrete subject or profession: professional competence of music teachers (Ērliha, 1998), competence of choir conductors (Znutiņš, 2004) etc. The conception of competence today is much broader than it was at the end of the 20th century: in the professional field, along with knowledge, skills and attitudes, requirements are set not only in the aspect of intellectual skills but also in the aspect of emotional and social skills (Handke, 1997; Maslo & Tiļļa, 2002; Maslo, 2003; Pabst–Krüger, 2006). All this implies that in the result of applying the acquired knowledge and experience, and due to the influence of individual's abilities and personal properties, every person is developing their own model of levels of various competence components, and this model is in the process of constant changes. Teacher's emotional competence as a component of professional competence has not been investigated in Latvia, and in other countries it has been explored insufficiently as well. Emotional competence is especially essential in music teacher's work, because learner's feeling of emotional satisfaction ensures a successful process of music studies, and the acquisition of the content of the subject "Music" in basic education should enhance the emotional and intellectual development of a learner, should develop creative abilities (Basic Education Standard in music, 1999). This leads to the conclusion that the improvement of prospective music teachers' emotional competence should be encouraged during their studies at the higher education establishment just in the same way as the improvement of other components of professional competence.

Aim of the research: to investigate the improvement of the component *emotion management* of emotional competence of students studying in the professional bachelor's study programme "Music Teacher" in Riga Academy of Pedagogy and Education Management in the process of studies.

Methods of research:

- Analysis of theoretical literature, content of the study programme, students' essays
- Empiric methods: self-assessment of the prospective music teachers, assessment by others (lecturers), R. Bar-On emotional intelligence survey *Emotional Quotient Inventory*
- Data processing methods: non-parametric statistic methods – Wilcoxon's test of comparison of two correlated data sample clusters, Wilcoxon's correlated pair test; Sign test; analysis of concordance in assessments by experts – Kendall's coefficient of concordance

2. Research on Teachers' Emotional Competence in Latvia and Abroad

At the turn of the 20th/21st centuries, the research on the issues relating to the content of teachers' competence grew topical. Scientists working in the field of music pedagogy also start addressing the problems of competence, however not much research is conducted on emotional competence. In her doctoral thesis, S. Ērliha (Ērliha, 1998) has worked out a model of developing professional pedagogical competence in which properties of a prospective music teacher's personality are related to the content and structure of teacher's activities. Two components belonging to the sphere of emotional competence and necessary for music teacher's professional competence are mentioned – emotionality and empathy, but they have not been studied extensively. In his doctoral thesis, E. Znutiņš has investigated the development of a choir conductor's competence in the music teachers' training process in the higher education institution, and the manifestation of competence has been characterized in three components: musical–artistic, psychological and pedagogical. M. Pabst–Krüger has included four areas in the content of competence: the subject, methodological, personal and social areas. This scholar interprets personal competence as the ability to achieve artistic expressiveness, as skills of presentation. He includes here also learner's motivation to acquire new knowledge and skills, which is stimulated by the individual's interests and positive emotions aroused in the process of music making. The aspects of social competence

indicated by the scholar are also tightly linked with emotions: skills of cooperating in music, the ability to persuade verbally and artistically, communicative and debating skills. However, just like the afore mentioned scientists, at interpreting music teacher's professional competence, M. Pabst-Krüger does not use the concept *emotional competence* and does not emphasize the necessity of having skills of emotion management and empathy, though their presence is obvious in any of the spheres of competence mentioned above (Pabst-Krüger, 2006).

The issues of teacher's emotional competence have been explored by several researchers who deal with different aspects of emotional competence: emotional competence to preserve teacher's health (Андреева, 2003); opportunities for improving emotional competence (Манойлова, 2004); the importance of reflection in the structure of teacher's emotional competence (Крайнова, 2010); the development of music teacher's emotional-communicative culture (Жакупова, 2008). According to these scholars, the structure of teacher's emotional competence includes perception and comprehension of one's own emotions, perception and comprehension of emotions of other people, and management of one's own and other people's emotions. But on the basis of the findings of such researchers of music pedagogy and music psychology as V. Petrushin (Петрушин, 2006), E. Abdulin un J. Nikolayev (Абдулин & Николаева, 2005), L. Bochkarev (Бочкарёв, 2006), V. Razhnikov (Ражников, 2006), D. Zariņš (2003), A. Līduma (2003), emotion psychologists J. Пуйн (Ильин, 2001), K. Izard (Изард, 2001), P. Lafrenjē (Лафренье, 2004), representatives of the theory of emotional intelligence G. Mayer, P. Salovey, D. Caruso (Mayer, Salovey, Caruso 2000), D. Goulmen (Goulmens, 2001), R. Bar-On (2000), M. Zaidner, G. Matthews and R. D. Roberts (Zeidner, Matthews & Roberts, 2009) the author of this paper attributes to the emotional competence of prospective music teachers the following components:

- Emotion management
- Empathy
- Emotional experience (see Fig. 1)

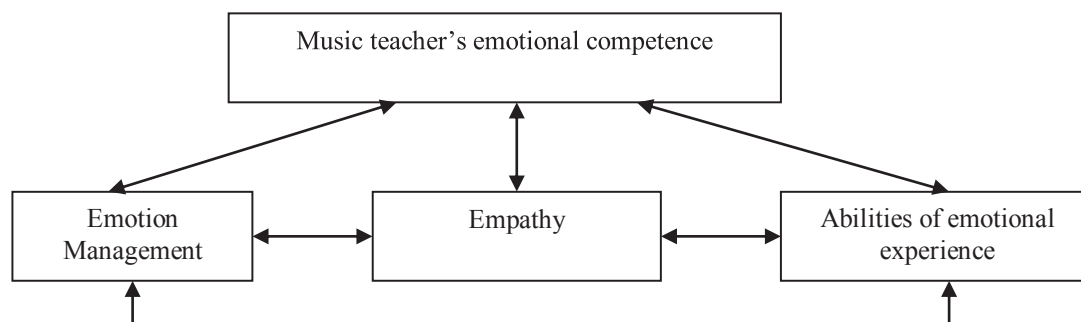


Fig. 1. Music teacher's emotional competence

The prospective music teacher's skill of emotion management, which is based on the perception, recognition and understanding one's own and other people's emotions, is necessary in two directions – stability and expressiveness (Kriumane & Marnauza, 2008). However, this paper will be concerned with the analysis of the aspect of emotional stability and the improvement of stability of students' emotions in the study process at the Riga Academy of Pedagogy and Education Management.

D. Golmen (2001), R. Bar-On (2000), M. Zeidner, G. Matthews, R. D. Roberts (Zeidner, Matthews & Roberts, 2009) et al. point out that self-discovery and understanding are a corner stone of the emotion

management skill, because during the process of introspection mind observes and explores everything that has been experienced, emotions including. Well-developed abilities of self-observation develop a skill to coolly evaluate one's feelings, both when they are still very vague and when they are passionate and stormy. Self-discovery is the first step towards self-control, towards the skill to manage one's emotions, to be emotionally stable.

E. Abdulin, J. Nikolayev are of the same opinion, and they state that a skill of being able to control one's impulsivity underlies many of achievements therefore it is vital to recognize the possibility to educate people in emotional aspect, which then would lead to emotional stability. Emotional self-awareness is considered to be part of teacher's professional reflection which begins with self-analysis (Абдулин & Николаева, 2005).

Consequently, the emotion management in the aspect of stability implies a skill, first, to perceive, recognize and understand one's emotions, then to control one's impulsivity adequate to the situation and calmly express one's emotions. This can be characterized as a balance. It is equally essential to maintain balance when acting in stress situations provoked by negative emotions.

3. Research Materials and Methods

The research was conducted within the period of 2005 – 2008. Thirteen students from the professional bachelor's study programme "Music Teacher" (specialization "Music Teacher of General Education School, Leader of Music Groups") of the Riga Academy of Pedagogy and Education Management, their lecturer of individual classes in conducting as well as the lecturer in methodology of teaching music participated in the research. The author of the research conducted pedagogical observations throughout the whole period of the research, participating in both individual classes and examinations.

To determine the emotional stability of prospective music teachers, the author of the research employed students' self-assessments as well as the assessments given by the lecturer of individual classes in conducting, lecturer in the methodology of teaching music and that provided by the researcher (further – experts) according to the indicators of the emotional competence criterion "Emotion Management" in the aspect of stability, developed by the author of the research. 6 first-year students and 7 second-year students carried out the first self-assessment and lecturers (further in the text – others) provided the assessment of students' emotional competence in 2005. A repeated self-assessment and assessment of the same students by experts were made in May, 2008, when the former 7 second-year students were already in the 4th year, and also in December, 2008, when the former 6 first-year students were also in the 4th year. The characterization of the indicator "Emotional Stability" of the emotional competence criterion "Emotion Management" according to which the self-assessment and assessment by others have been carried out is given in Table 1, see –Table 1.

The self-assessment and the assessment by others were carried out within a 10 point grading system: low emotional stability corresponds to 1– 4 points, average – to 5 – 7 points, but high emotional stability – to 8 – 10 points.

In 2005 and 2008, the prospective music teachers conducted also R. Bar-On emotional intelligence survey Emotional Quotient Inventory adapted by J. Roze in Latvian version. This survey was presented for the first time in 1996, at the conference of the Association of American Psychologists in Toronto, Canada, but it was published in 1997 (Bar-On, 1997). The scientist points out that the survey has been translated into 22 languages so far. The survey comprises five scales which are subdivided into fifteen sub-scales, on the whole including 133 statements which have to be evaluated by applying 5 point system, beginning with "completely does not correspond to me" and ending with "completely corresponds to me". The emotional stability is characterized by three sub-scales of the survey: emotional self-awareness, stress tolerance and self-control. In each sub-scale there are 8 or 9 statements which

provide the opportunity to reveal to what extent in the majority of cases and situations each of the statements is true as regards the emotions, thoughts and actions of the respondent (Bar-On, 2000), see Table 2.

Table 1. Characterization of the indicator *Emotional Stability* of the emotional competence criterion *Emotion Management*

Criterion – Emotion Management	Characterization of the indicator
Indicator – Emotional Stability	
1st assessment – Balance	<p>High level. In interpersonal communication with study mates and lecturers a student is always emotionally balanced.</p> <p>Average level. In interpersonal communication with study mates and lecturers a student is always emotionally balanced.</p> <p>Low level. In interpersonal communication with study mates and lecturers a student is always emotionally balanced.</p>
2nd assessment – Resistance to negative emotions	<p>High level. In the study process a student never yields to negative emotions, is able to control his impulsivity.</p> <p>Average level. In the study process a student never yields to negative emotions, is able to control his impulsivity.</p> <p>Low level. In the study process a student never yields to negative emotions, is able to control his impulsivity.</p>

Table 2. Characterization of the sub-scales of Bar-On survey EQ-I (Bar-On, 1997), adapted by J. Roze in Latvian

Characterization of the sub-scale “Emotional Self-Awareness” in Bar-On survey	Characterization of the sub-scale “Stress Tolerance” in Bar-On survey	Characterization of the sub-scale “Self-Control” in Bar-On survey
Awareness about one’s emotions is the ability to recognize one’s emotions and feelings identify differences between them, to know what these emotions imply, what has caused or affected them. These abilities are revealed in the skill of verbalizing emotions, emotional experience.	Stress tolerance is the ability not to yield to unfavourable events, stress situations. These abilities are manifested in the skill to choose effective activity to handle the stress, in a positive attitude to a new experience, to changes, in the belief that complicated situations can be resolved. The ability to be calm and self-controlled and act not submitting to strong emotions.	Self-control is the ability to resist or hinder impulses, drive or temptation to act hastily. It is a skill to control aggression, hostility, anger, a skill not to allow oneself an irresponsible, explosive, unpredictable behaviour

4. Characterization of the research

The analysis of students’ self-assessment, Bar-On survey and assessment by experts in the context of the variables (indicators) of the indicator “Emotional Stability” of the emotional competence criterion “Emotion Management”.

The changes in the indicator “Emotional Stability” of the criterion “Emotion Management” of students’ emotional competence are analyzed on the basis of:

- Students’ self-assessment in two aspects of emotional stability – Balance and Resistance to Negative Emotions
- Three sub-scales of Bar-On survey conducted by students: Emotional Self-Awareness, Stress Tolerance, Self-Control
- Assessment of two aspects of the indicator “Emotional Stability” – Balance, Resistance to Negative Emotions – of students’ emotional competence carried out by lecturers as experts
- Students’ self-assessment and assessment of lecturers as experts

For the first time the data were obtained in 2005, for the second time – in 2008. The data provided by experts were summed up. The method applied for data processing was non-parametric statistical method for comparing two related data sample clusters: Sign test and Wilcoxon’s test, but for the analysis of the concordance of assessments given by experts – Kendall’s concordance coefficient was applied.

5. Results and their Evaluation

Students’ self-assessment given to the second aspect “Resistance to Negative Emotions” of the indicator “Emotional Stability”.

The self-assessment given to students’ emotional stability aspect “Balance” reveals statistically significant differences between the first measurement and the repeated measurement as it is shown in a diagram of graphic comparison of sample clusters (Sign test, $v > V = 100\%$, $Z = 2.475$; $p = 0.013$; Wilcoxon’s test, $N = 13$, $T = 0.00$; $Z = 2.521$; $p = 0.0112$) (see Fig. 2).

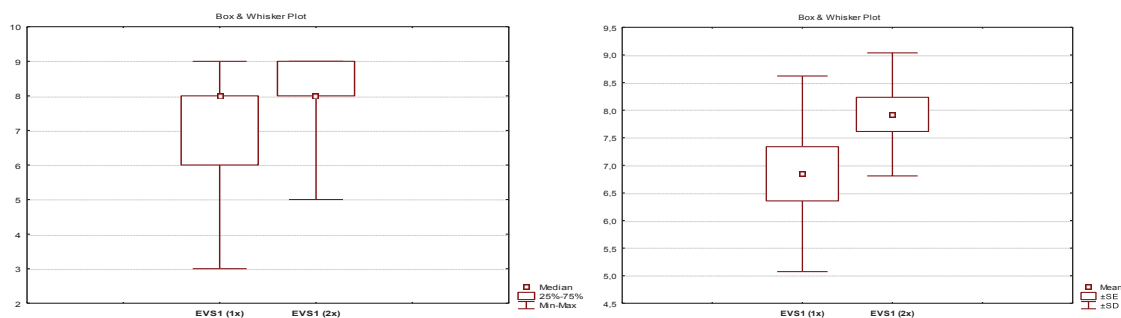


Fig. 2. (a) Statistically significant differences between the first and the second measurement of self-assessment established in students’ emotional stability aspect “Balance”; (b) Statistically significant differences between the first and the repeated measurement of self-assessment established in students’ emotional stability aspect “Balance”

Figure 2 (a) illustrates that in the first measurement the median coincides with the 3rd quartile (one quartile corresponds to 3 respondents in this research) which implies that 50% of respondents have received high evaluation, 8 points, while the second measurement coincides with the 1st quartile. Consequently, the result of the second measurement is higher. Figure 2 (b), too, shows that the second measurement of the self-assessment of students’ emotional stability produces higher results, which testifies to the fact that the emotional balance has grown in the process of studies.

Students’ self-assessment given to the second aspect “Resistance to Negative Emotions” of the criterion “Emotional Stability”.

Sign test reveals essential differences between the two measurements of the aspect “Resistance to Negative Emotions” of the emotional competence indicator “Emotional Stability”. These results are also confirmed by Wilcoxon’s test, see diagrams of graphical comparison in Figures 3 (a) and 3 (b). (see Figure 3).

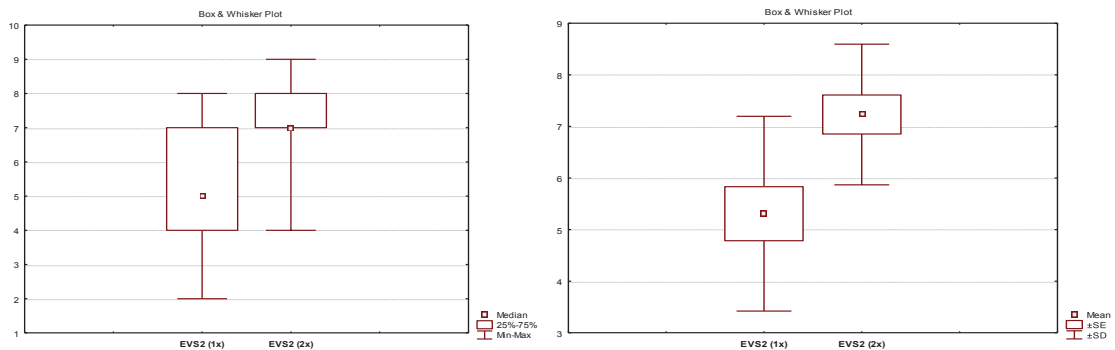


Fig. 3. (a) Statistically significant differences between the first and the second measurement of the self-assessment established in the students’ emotional stability aspect “Resistance to Negative Emotions”; (b) Statistically significant differences between the first and the second measurement established in students’ emotional stability aspect “Resistance to Negative Emotions”

From this we can infer that the aspect “Resistance to Negative Emotions” of the emotional competence indicator “Emotional Stability” is higher in the measurements taken in the second time. This might testify to the fact that the resistance to negative emotions during the study process has increased.

The analysis of the data provided by three sub-scales of the Bar-On survey: Emotional Self-Awareness, Stress Tolerance, Self-Control.

Having analyzed the data obtained from the three sub-scales of the Bar-On survey: Emotional Self-Awareness, Stress Tolerance, Self-Control, it is possible to infer that the criteria of both the Sign test and the Wilcoxon’s test prove to the fact that the study process has fostered emotional self-awareness, because the data of the second measurement are considerably higher (see Fig. 4).

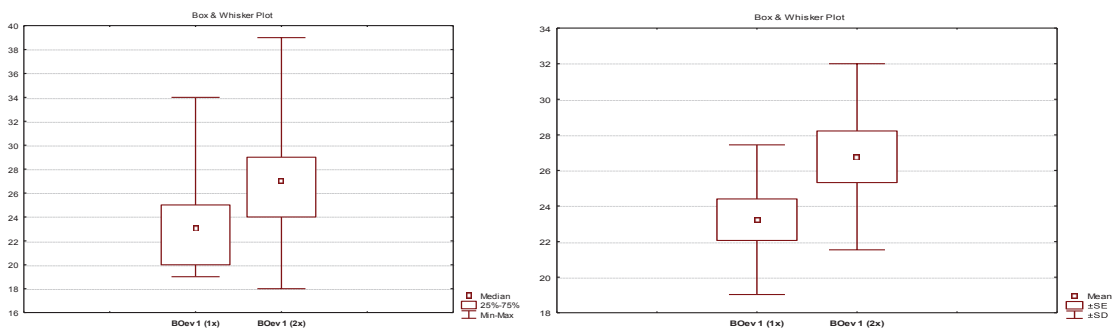


Fig. 4. (a) Statistically significant differences between the first and the second measurement of the data from the Bar-On survey sub-scale “Emotional Self-Awareness”; (b) Statistically significant differences between the first and the second measurement of the data from the Bar-On survey sub-scale “Emotional Self-Awareness”

We can infer that the process of the acquisition of professional education is related to the need for emotional self-awareness and contributes to the improvement of this criterion.

In Figures below, the measurements of the Bar-On survey's sub-scale "Stress Tolerance" are presented. At comparing the obtained results we can infer that the tests prove to the fact that the measurement data from the repeated survey are considerably higher, see Fig. 5.

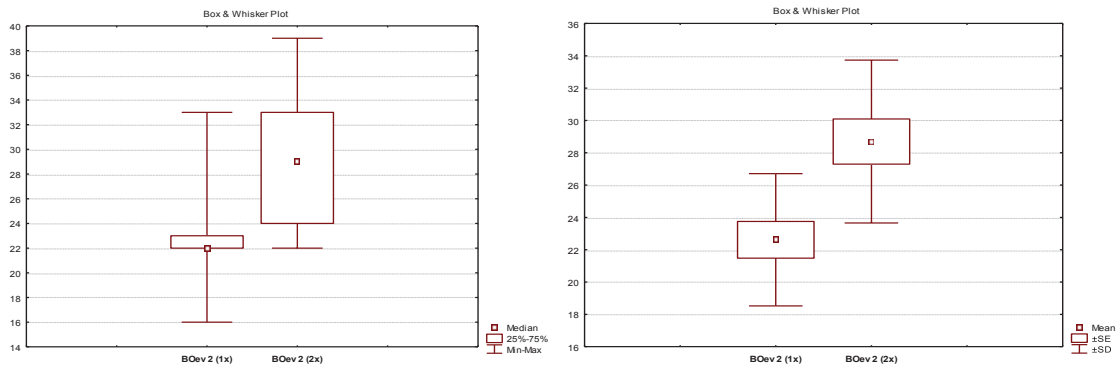


Fig. 5. (a) Statistically significant differences between the first and the second measurements of the data from the Bar-On survey sub-scale "Stress Tolerance"; (b) Statistically significant differences between the first and the second measurement of the data from the Bar-On survey sub-scale "Stress Tolerance"

The next Bar-On survey's sub-scale indicates to students' ability of controlling themselves. After comparing the data of the first and the second measurement, it is possible to infer that, unlike the data of previous sub-scales, this time the data show a slight increase in the results established by the Sign test, but Wilcoxon's test does not confirm it (see Fig. 6).

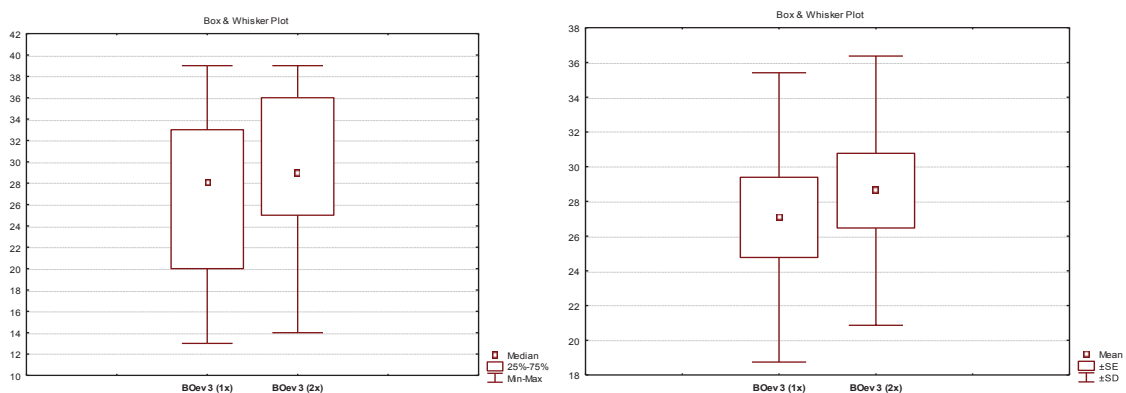


Fig. 6. (a) The data from the Bar-On survey's sub-scale "Self-Control" do not indicate differences between the first and the second measurement; (b) The data from the Bar-On survey's sub-scale "Self-Control" indicate statistically insignificant differences between the first and the second measurement

Consequently, Wilcoxon's test (Figure 6 (a)) as well as the Sign test (Figure 6 (b)) has not established statistically significant differences between the data of the first and the second measurement. This can be attributed to the fact that the prospective music teachers have acquired skills of self-control sufficiently

well already before their studies in a higher education establishment, and therefore the increase in results is not very essential, while other aspects of emotion management, such as emotional self-awareness, stress tolerance, which are more internal processes rather than emotional self-control, have improved in the result of knowledge and experience gained at a higher education institution.

Comparison of the data from assessments by experts given to the aspect “Emotional Stability” in the criterion “Emotion Management” of prospective music teachers’ emotional competence.

The analysis of concordance of assessments by experts was made by applying Kendall’s coefficient of concordance. Coefficients were calculated for the variables “Emotional Balance” and “Resistance to Negative Emotions”, taking into consideration the data of the first and the second measurement: EV1 – balance, EV2 – resistance to negative emotions:

EV1_before Coeff. of Concordance = ,87101 Aver. rank $r = ,80652$

EV2_before Coeff. of Concordance = ,88375 Aver. rank $r = ,82563$

EV1_after Coeff. of Concordance = ,88237 Aver. rank $r = ,82356$

EV2_after Coeff. of Concordance = ,91193 Aver. rank $r = ,86790$

As it is seen, the assessment by experts has high concordance and is within the range from 0.871 to 0.912. The average coefficient of rank correlation changes within the range from 0.807 to 0.868, which testifies to high concordance of assessment given by experts. This implies that the experts have confirmed the unity of subjective criteria for the researched qualities and demonstrate almost identical approach to evaluating them.

On comparing the assessment given by experts to the aspect “Balance” of the indicator “Emotional Stability” in the criterion “Emotion Management” of prospective music teachers’ emotional competence, Wilcoxon’s test establishes significant differences between the first and the second assessment by experts, which can be attributed to the fact that students have improved this property and skills by acquiring study courses needed for the profession of music teachers, see Fig. 7.

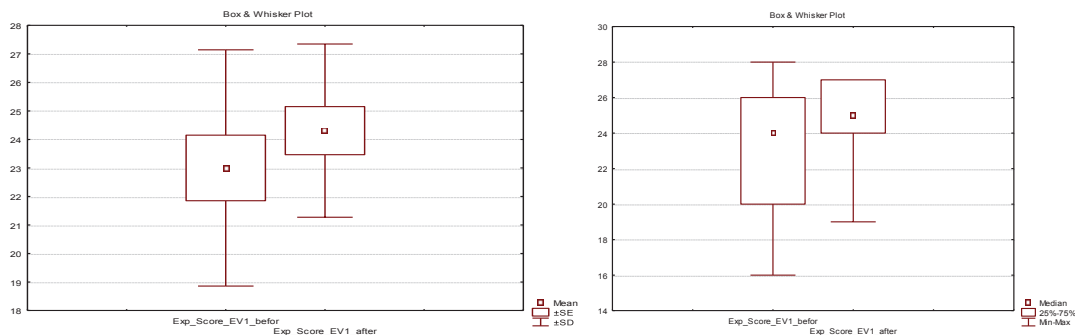


Fig. 7. (a) Assessment by experts given to the aspect “Balance” of the indicator “Emotional Stability” in the emotional competence criterion “Emotion Management”; (b) Assessment by experts given to the aspect “Balance” of the indicator “Emotional Stability” in the emotional competence criterion “Emotion Management”

The data provided by the analysis of the assessment given by experts, show that the data of the repeated survey testify to a higher assessment of the aspect “Emotional Stability” in the emotional competence criterion “Emotion Management” in both tests (see Fig. 7 (b)). The next aspect of the criterion of emotional competence “Emotion Management” assessed by experts is “Resistance to Negative Emotions” (see Fig. 8).

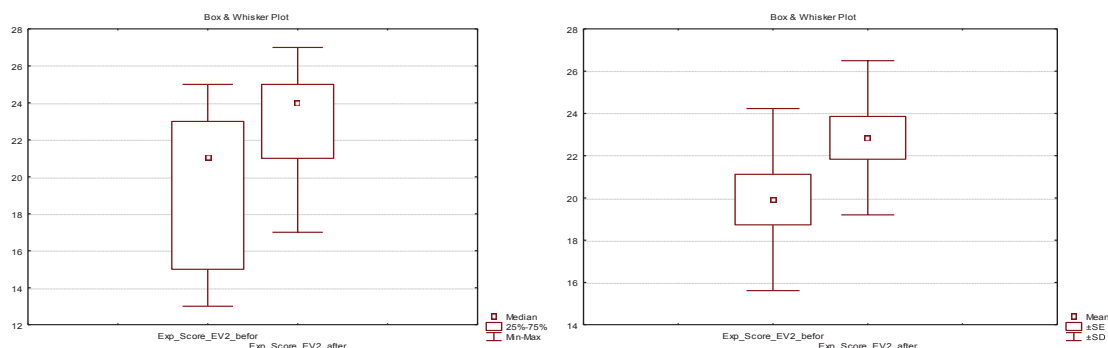


Fig. 8. (a) Assessment by experts and student’s self-assessment given to the aspect of “Resistance to Negative Emotions” of the indicator “Emotional Stability” in the emotional competence criterion “Emotion Management”; (b) Assessment by experts and students’ self-assessment given to the aspect “Resistance to Negative Emotions” of the indicator “Emotional Stability” in the emotional competence criterion “Emotion Management”

At comparing the data of the assessment by experts given to the aspect of “Resistance to Negative Emotions”, we see that both tests identify essential differences between the first and the second assessment made by experts. Consequently, data provided by experts prove to the fact that, like in the aspect “Balance”, the improvement of this property, too, has taken place due to the acquisition of study courses necessary for the profession of music teachers.

6. Conclusion

Having analyzed the obtained data we can infer that the variables of the first and the second measurements have statistically significant differences.

Within the period from 2005 to 2008, several changes in the study courses of the study programme were made in the context of developing emotional competence, but the research does not determine which study courses make greater contribution to the improvement of the emotional competence and, consequently, to the improvement of the prospective music teacher’s professional efficiency. The research reveals the positive influence of the programme content and the process of studies in general on the improvement of emotion management of the prospective music teachers. In the result of the acquired knowledge and skills and experience gained in the process of studies, the skill of emotional self-awareness and the skill to resist to negative emotions develop, and self-control develops as well.

The research also shows that it is possible to establish the changes in the level of the development of personal qualities mentioned in the survey by self-analysis and observations of external experts, which is confirmed by special psychological measurements. The results yielded by three different data obtaining sources (self-assessment, assessment by experts, psychological evaluation) allow making assumption that positive changes in personal qualities of prospective music teachers can be attributed also to the process of acquiring the content of the professional study programme.

7. Inferences

The analysis of findings of psychological and pedagogical sciences results in determining the components of prospective music teachers' emotional competence: emotion management, empathy and emotional experience. At evaluating the opportunities for improving the emotional competence of prospective music teachers within the frame of the professional bachelor's study programme "Music Teacher" offered by Riga Academy of Pedagogy and Education management, it is possible to infer that in the second survey, the students' self-assessment is closer to the second assessment given by experts than in the first survey. This testifies to the fact that the students' assessment of their personal qualities is very close to that given by experts. This in its turn proves to the improvement in two aspects – Emotional Balance and Resistance to Negative Emotions- of the component "Emotion Management" of prospective music teachers' emotional competence.

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